

FREEDOM ANARCHIST FORTNIGHTLY

JUNE 11 '77

VOLUME 38 N° 11

FIFTEEN PENCE

Red Brigades P.3 Political Control P.9 Bt. Syndicalism P.11

MANKIND IS about to make a leap into the future with a technology that developed from the deliberate destruction of two cities and their inhabitants by nuclear devices, at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Those of us who were about at the time felt the wave of horror and foreboding that went round the world in consequence of this act. The development of nuclear weapons has not ceased. Even the testing of such weapons has probably resulted in casualties that have been uncounted. The atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons was abandoned by the world nuclear powers, apart from China and France, after the growth of a world-wide campaign spear-headed by direct action of the Committee of 100.

use of timber as fuel in the past (particularly in China) has had a devastating ecological effect. It could be argued that use of nuclear energy might have some beneficial effects in this respect. The main practical objections are:

- 1) the creation of highly toxic radioactive wastes which there is no technology to adequately contain;
- 2) that the necessarily vast numbers of power stations will increase the background radioactivity continually (remember that many experts consider that any increase in this is hazardous);
- 3) the ecological effects of heat wastage (into water and the atmosphere);
- 4) the pressure on other finite resources that unlimited energy resources presupposes.

ed by MIT) concludes that the supplies of oil will cease to meet demand between 1985 and 1995." And he concludes:

...wind-power is close to the stage where a large production prototype could be built and at present seems to be the only way in which a major part of the 'energy gap' could be filled in time; it should produce useful energy at about one third the cost of a nuclear system.

"WE SHOULD NOT RELY ON A PROCESS THAT PRODUCES PLUTONIUM UNLESS THERE IS NO REASONABLE ALTERNATIVE."

— report of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution. No.6(HMSO)

WANT, WASTE & RADIOACTIVITY

Around these nuclear activities a vast commercial and industrial network had been persuaded that this great act of violence by the United States could be harnessed for the peaceful use and good of mankind.

Over the years the inherent dangers of this technology, so dramatically and tragically illustrated by the dropping of the atomic bombs, have been pushed to the back of the human mind as we have come to accept a belief that the continued functioning of human society depends on large quantities of energy.

Leaving aside here the social consequences of nuclear-based society, let us deal with the economics of nuclear energy.

A report in the Guardian by Anthony Tucker recently said

...this means that we are now talking about public investment for the whole nuclear programme of sums well in excess of £ 2,000 millions and probably in excess of £ 3,000 millions during the next decade. And it is already clear from many assessments that this is an act of faith upon which no normal economic returns can be expected.

THIS SORT OF INVESTMENT ALSO REQUIRES A TREMENDOUS CONSUMPTION OF FOSSIL FUEL TO MANUFACTURE THE MILLIONS OF TONS OF CONCRETE REQUIRED. TO BUILD THE REACTORS FOR SUCH AN ENORMOUS PROGRAMME.

As has been pointed out by Professor Ryle of the Mullard Radio Astronomy Laboratory at Cambridge University, a large proportion of the energy we use is taken up in heating buildings. In a climate like Britain's where temperatures fluctuate habitually, appropriate adjustments can easily be made by variation of burning of oil, gas or coal. Electricity cannot easily be stored and therefore the number of power stations will have to be increased enormously to cope with the peak periods. In his recent letter in reply to a Guardian leader Professor Ryle says, "How soon this capacity will be needed depends on whether the present trends in total energy demand can be reduced, but it seems likely that by the year 2000 world supplies of oil will be in short supply and very much more expensive. The most recent analysis (Energy—Global Prospects 1985-2000, sponsor-

LONDON GREENPEACE
PRE-WINDSCALE INQUIRY

"Mutants' March"

SUNDAY 12 JUNE 1977

Assemble 2.30 p.m. at Riverside Gardens
S.W.1 (north end of Vauxhall Bridge)

March goes via Electricity Council,
Department of the Environment, British
Nuclear Fuels Ltd, — to end in
ST. JAMES' SQUARE (Rio Tinto Zinc
and British Nuclear Associates Ltd.)

Fear of the consequences of widespread dependence on nuclear energy has spread to the Establishment itself and they are having an inquiry not only into the processing plant at Windscale but also into the fast breeder reactor. In the House of Commons on May 27th, the Environment Secretary, Peter Shore, according to The Guardian "made it plain that he requires far greater public debate on the subject before he is prepared to allow the reactor to be built.

In particular, he is concerned at the long radioactive life of the nuclear waste left after the plutonium has been burned in the reactor—and at the dangers for a free democratic society posed by the substantial presence of plutonium, which is also the raw material for nuclear weapons.

Mr. Shore said: 'I do not think anyone can doubt that we are dealing with problems of quite exceptional character, and are making decisions that inevitably go far into the future in their implications.'

NO MORE



**NUCLEAR
POWER**

It is true that the consumption of vast quantities of hydrocarbon fuels (gas, coal, oil) also pollutes and that supplies are limited. The



'We are creating as a necessary consequence of nuclear power highly active wastes that have a life to be measured in hundreds, if not thousands, of years.' "

The EEC, also concerned with violent public reaction to nuclear power, are suggesting that inquiries on the British model might be followed. However, in the British inquiry the opposition to the nuclear proposals is denied the provision of public monies to fund its case, which puts the objectors at a disadvantage in the face of the nuclear lobby's almost limitless funds to support their case.

The question is, has the decision already been made and are these inquiries merely cosmetics to ease the programme through and gain public support?

The Establishment has a dilemma. In order to continue the rake's progress of ever-increasing industrial growth with the enlargement of multinational and national capital an inexhaustible source of power is necessary. To use inexhaustible sources of free power it is necessary to make an initial investment and to maintain it.

There is one nuclear power station that has been supplying the earth with energy since before there was life on the planet, and safely too. The sun was also the source of all the energy stored in the form of fossil fuels, through the agency of green plants. This very valuable source of usable energy has been very much diminished as a result of poor agricultural practice and industrialisation and wasteful consumption.

Social Consequences of Going Nuclear

This is a field in which the inquiry is likely to be limited in its approach. Given that established power already uses draconian measures to secure the state (e.g. the Terrorism Act) it does not need a change of thinking to increase the measures to cope or attempt to cope with the dangers of plutonium going astray.

Referring to Anthony Tucker's report in the Guardian once more:

When the Atomic Energy Authority and British Nuclear Fuels armed its nuclear guards someone said, unkindly perhaps but accurately in this age of highly professional terrorism, that you cannot create armed guards by merely hanging holsters on watchmen. Even more, you cannot create a secure nuclear industry while you continue to proliferate an out-of-date and insecurely-fragmented industrial system. And from the point of view of industrial nuclear security the Windscale proposals appear to be either out of date, incomplete, or irrelevant. From the point of view of aiding non-proliferation through the provision of a kind of regional centre, they are absurd.

Therefore it is reasonable to believe that nuclear technology will mean more centralised social control. Such high technology means less employment except for technocrats into whose hands we are placing the future of man kind.

As The Leveller for June 1977 says:

Why all the fuss? Because the plant expansion would make Windscale one of the West's main centres for reprocessing spent

nuclear fuel, including plutonium, which is one of the most incomprehensibly dangerous substances known. And because the Windscale expansion would be an essential step towards plutonium reactors as a major world energy source. This energy option would mean a highly centralised society, getting even more of its energy requirements from a few huge power plants than we already do. Such a society would also need to be a police state, with large amounts of weapons—grade fissile material on road and rail—the 1976 Atomic Energy Authority (Special Constables) Act, with draconian search and removal powers for the nuclear police, indicates that we're well on the way to such a state. And it would also be a very dangerous society for nuclear power workers, and the public, if the nuclear industry's record so far is anything to go by.

Energy and Want

Never in the whole history of man has there been such a colossal consumption of energy, and never has there been such widespread hunger and malnutrition. Industrialisation and its energy requirements increase the problem rather than solve it. Georg Borgstrom in his book The Hungry Planet (Collier, New York 1965) stresses this in his chapter on India:

... there prevails a deplorably erroneous notion that industrialization as such would increase the food supply. It is often said that India's unemployed number as many as the whole work force in the United States. This refers to the approximately seventy-five million seasonally unemployed in the monsoon-governed agriculture. Large-scale industrialization may seem an appropriate measure, but it does not change the basic condition that the people must have food when they work in the mines, power plants, iron works, or canning factories. Obviously such industrialization increases the productivity of the country and takes care of the human surplus that could not possibly stay on the land and continue dividing it up into smaller and smaller plots. Very little new land can be exploited. Industrialization further improves the individual's purchasing power and thereby increases demand, but this actually means that more food is needed, not less. Food therefore remains the key problem. (p.149 "Industrialization—Fallacy or Remedy?")

As he goes on to point out, industrialisation and urbanisation increase population problems and diminish food supplies. Nuclear energy will increase all these problems, not diminish them. It will increase mass alienation because it will ensure the continuous development of this process.

Privileged society is a violent society, industrialisation increases that violence and extends it to all parts of the environment, and nuclear energy is a violent source of energy conceived in war and developed with a disregard for human life. Albert Camus expresses the essential all too clearly in Neither Victims Nor Executioners:

One must understand what fear means: what it implies and what it rejects. It implies and rejects the same fact: a world where murder is legitimate, and where human life is considered trifling... All I ask is that, in the midst of a murderous world, we agree to reflect on murder and to make a choice. After that, we can dis-

tinguish those who accept the consequences of being murderers themselves or the accomplices of murderers, and those who refuse to do so with all their force and being. Since this terrible dividing line does actually exist, it will be a gain if it be clearly marked.

A violent society spawns a violent technology and we must be aware that the tools of technology will be those suited to the commercial aspects of our production, which uses the capital resources of the earth for profit and derides husbandry as being against the march of progress.

As Murray Bookchin says in his essay "Toward an Ecological Solution":

The essence of the ecological crisis in our time is that this society—more than any other in the past—is literally undoing the world of organic evolution. It is a truism to say that humanity is part of the fabric of life. It is perhaps more important at this late stage to emphasize that humanity depends critically upon the complexity and variety of life, that human well-being and survival rest upon a long evolution of organisms into increasingly complex and interdependent forms. The development of life into a complex web, the elaboration of primal animals and plants into highly varied forms, has been the precondition for the evolution and survival of humanity itself and for a harmonized relationship between humanity and nature.

COME TO SUNNY WINDSCALE HAPPENINGS ON THE SITE
Contact Windscale Festival, Waterloo Place,
178 Oxford Road, Manchester.

SCRAM ---- SCOTTISH READERS NOTE
Scottish Campaign to Resist the Atomic
Menace
2 Ainslie Place, Edinburgh 3 (031 225 7752
(evenings). (031 229 6854

NOT A FESTIVAL

MALVILLE, FRANCE

Peace News reports 20.5.77 plans for a mass invasion of the Super-Phoenix fast breeder site at Malville this summer. There were protest demonstrations at this site last year. But this year, says the report "it won't be a festival". A meeting to discuss plans for actions in July agreed that the site has to be occupied, this time to destroy all constructed installations and that, all legal means being exhausted, "tens of thousands of people must be prepared to take risks... The idea is to submerge the police by weight of numbers and determination, without initiating violence. Militants will have to have protective clothing, wet blankets and cloths soaked in lemon juice to lessen the effect of tear-gas, and also tools for entering and destroying the site." All participants are to be self-organised and to have made their own arrangements with local people to put them up in return for: farm work Organisation of the action is to be decentralised, with people coming in groups who trust each other. PN's reporter says that the idea evolved because people are tired of the eternal festival-demos and that "the radical nature of the proposals has already divided the anti-nuclear movement." (No address is given for contact or enquiries.)

more on page 3

The Red Brigades At War

IN TURIN last month the trial on charges of terrorism of 53 members of the Red Brigades came to a swift halt. After the Red Brigades had claimed responsibility for the assassination of the president of the Turin lawyers, avv. Fulvio Croce, these refused to take on the defence of the prisoners. Members of the jury presented medical certificates and other excuses for dropping out. The president of the court concluded, "This is a defeat for the state." He seemed thereby to be vindicating the Red Brigades' own claim: "To put the proletarian revolution on trial is not possible."

This has not been the first failure to try the Red Brigades. Last year at the same time their trial in Turin was postponed. If the implications of the massacre of Piazza Fontana back in December 1969 and the treatment of its scapegoats have revealed the charade of State "justice", the consistent inability to try the Red Brigades has revealed the fragility of its hold upon the population.

But who, and why, are the Red Brigades? It is likely that their origin, at least to some extent, lies with that same massacre and the dramatic, if still unclarified results of an investigation that continues to this day. The story has virtually been told in *I Pugnatori* (The Stabbers), the latest novel of the Sicilian writer Leonardo Sciascia. When 13 people are simultaneously stabbed in equidistant parts of the city of Palermo in 1862 by a number of identically dressed assailants, the magistrate discovers that behind the "horrible machinations" is no less a figure than the senator of the Realm, the prince Sant'Elia. What follows is a deliberately drawn parallel between then and now, and particularly the story of Piazza Fontana. The killings, the obscure complicities, the investigations blocked from on high, the whole "strategy of tension" which aims to incubate and hatch a coup or revolution through the steady raising of the political temperature.

We know that this strategy failed as far as the Black Prince Borghese and his friends in the government and the State security services are concerned - at least in the short term. But

the effect on the far left cannot be exaggerated. It was in this atmosphere that the Red Brigades were formed - an atmosphere in which civil war could be thought to be imminent, and with it the collapse of the corporative capitalist system and its Communist allies.

A group of workers and middle class students from the red areas of northern and central Italy, the Red Brigades believed that "The great conciliation of Pci with bourgeois capital will be preceded by recessions, factory closures, increasing unemployment, waves of inflation and political-parliamentary crisis" and that these phenomena must be quickened into a situation of revolution, and civil war. It appears that the most eminent leader of the Red Brigades, Renato Curcio, had changed his mind since writing "Armed struggle in Italy is pure adventurism: a pastime for petit-bourgeois in search of titillation." (1)



Renato Curcio, Pietro Bertolazzi e Paolo Maurizio Ferrari

It was in 1970 that the Red Brigades launched their attack with the burning down of the property of an industrialist. In the following years they showed considerable versatility: invasion of party political offices (especially of Catholic orientation), kidnapping of magistrates like Mario Sossi, "punitive expeditions", humiliation, interrogation and imprisonment of industrial chiefs, series of attacks on the barracks and motor-vehicles of carabinieri, sabotage of the Fiat-Mirafiori works in Turin, assassination of the prosecutor Francesco Coco, that of Fulvio Croce and others, and most recently

the shooting (to injure) of conservative journalists and newspaper owners or TV news editors like Indro Montanelli and Emilic Rossi.

The Red Brigades have defined different stages in the development of their war against the system. The first was the emergent stage in which a small compact band of revolutionary communists opposed the agents of a State still inexperienced and unprepared in "anti-guerrilla" operations. It ended with the kidnapping of Sossi, which was a major publicity stunt. The kidnapping introduced a second stage - that of the special anti-terrorist units of the judicial police under the command of general Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa. The aim was the outright extermination of the Red Brigades, irrespective of the actions they could be proved or had claimed to be responsible for. Curcio wryly complimented them on their efficiency in a country where nothing worked.

The second stage involved the gathering of precise information on these units to enable their liquidation. As Dalla Chiesa's men, plus the government spies and provocateurs (including the Jesuit priest Giroto) set to work, and the numbers of arrested brigadiers increased, another main task became the development of effective channels of communication with the prisoners, and the infiltration of the prison warden service. Escape attempts have succeeded on several occasions. The prison work also brought about an alliance with the Armed Proletarian Nuclei (Nap). This operational link

(cont p 6)

NUCLEAR ENERGY WOULD CONTINUE TO FUEL INDUSTRIAL CAPITALIST WASTE

ONE OF the features of modern capitalism is its enormous waste of resources. If a rational approach was made to this question the need for energy could be cut dramatically, with human, environmental and social benefits that would be enormous.

To do this one would have to increase the pressure for smaller social units where the husbanding of resources is more easily comprehended by all.

One has only to go through a list of commercial activities in capitalist society to see that the waste in resources and human energy is enormous.

—Transport, and the pressure for speed and horsepower. The motor-car being anti-social and polluting, its ramifications in cost have never been really assessed. A rational approach should be applied to air travel as well as to road transport.

—The energy put into Defence is wasteful in fuel, materials and land use.

—The packaging, advertising and processing of food and other products result in oceans of waste, and no honest and humane society can ignore it. This includes:

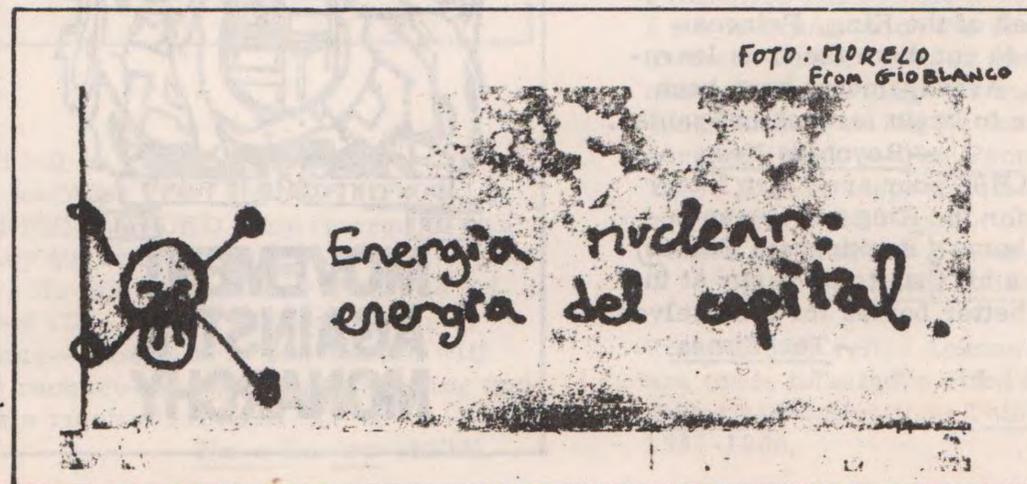
—Paper. The enormous bureaucratic and advertising consumption of this product which puts enormous pressure on dwindling forests which are ecologically vital.

—The production of goods designed to have a short life. This includes the fashion industry

and all sorts of industrial hardware. This aspect of industrial capitalism needs to be closely examined for resource and energy saving — Insulation and space heating merits more than the desultory response evoked by the cost of oil.

This is not a comprehensive list of what should be done before such a dangerous expedient as a nuclear energy programme is embarked upon.

ALAN ALBON.





ROYAL FLUSH



The Queen in Scotland

A red-cheeked woman
laughed tearfully:
'She spoke to us
Oh, she spoke to us!'

Ivan Rowin on last week's royal journey (Sunday Telegraph 22.5.77): "'Of course it's a con', a middle-aged Glaswegian told me drily. 'But it's a con we happen to enjoy'."

* * *

WHAT THE sex of the king-worshipper who, by loyal waiting and watching, had the high inspiring experience of using the privy next immediately after His Royal Highness, may be left in lenient obscurity.

—GEOFFREY DENNIS, Coronation Commentary (1937).

THIS COUNTRY and Commonwealth last Tuesday were not far from the Kingdom of Heaven. —ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY on Elizabeth II's Coronation (1952)

MUCH AS we all admired—almost worshipped—King Edward VIII as Prince and King, it was well known that he was not personally a philatelist. —Stamp Collector's Fortnightly (1937).

PRISONERS IN a corrective training centre were reported to have gained great spiritual benefit from seeing the coronation on television. (Quoted by KINGSLEY MARTIN in The Crown and the Establishment.)

QUEEN ALEXANDRA, when Princess of Wales, walked lame after an illness; at once hundreds of servile or ambitious ladies developed 'the Alexandra limp'. —GEOFFREY DENIS (op. cit.)

THE WAR EFFORT

AT THE wish of the King, Princess Elizabeth is to cut down the time learning German. Arrangements have been made for her to begin lessons in Spanish.

—Reynolds News

THE HOMELESS poor are more likely to be sorry for the King and Queen because their home [Buckingham Palace] also has been hit than to be happy at the prospect of better homes for themselves.

—The Times

* * *

"I have seen a number of names suggested for our new princess, the daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Kent, Mary, Marina, Helen Alice have been suggested. In my opinion, none of these sufficiently marks the extraordinary miracle of a royal birth in a time of great national stress."—Letter in The Observer 3.1.37).

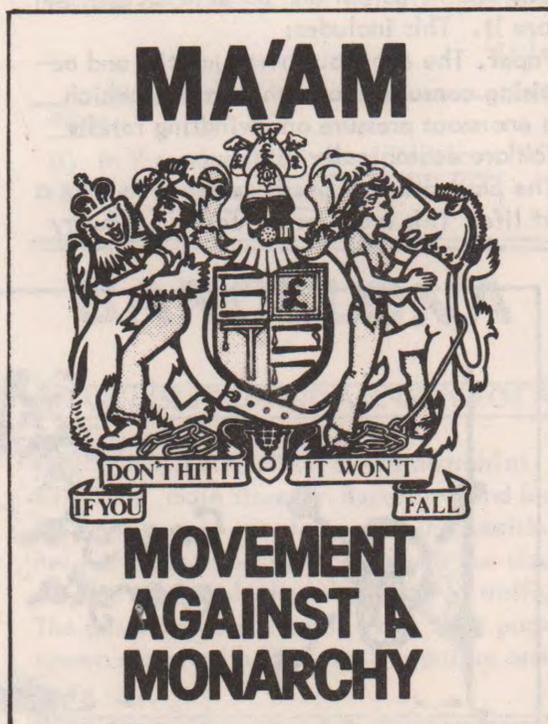
DON'T THINK that we begrudge the children's coronation parties. On the contrary, the Communists are doing everything they can to make the parties a success. . . the Communists want the children to have a good time all the time. (C. P. pamphlet Coronation, c. 1952.)

IN SOUTHPORT the magistrates decided that during the Jubilee celebrations, children over 14 should be allowed to see films licensed for adults only
—Evening Standard (1935)

THE NAME 'Jubilee' was being given to every novelty of the day, from a new sort of chocolate stick to the latest baby in the Ape House at the Zoo. The Post Office broke the conservative tradition of English philately by bringing out an issue of Jubilee stamps. The King happened to be one of the keenest philatelists in England—and about this time knighted the keeper of his collections. There were also Jubilee dresses, Jubilee hats, and even Jubilee finger-nails—these were painted on each index finger in red, white, and blue with a small gold crown stencilled on top. The Royal School of Needlework designed a Jubilee sampler that everyone could make decorated with pictures of guns, palaces and yachts and little verses such as

'Prince of sportsmen, brilliant shot,
But happiest aboard his yacht.'

—GRAVES & HODGE, The Long Week-End



LOUSY BUT LOYAL

—East End Coronation Banner, 1937

EDWARD VII, when Prince of Wales, had one day finished his after-luncheon cup of coffee at an hotel, and walked out; in rushed a lady, snatched the cup and triumphantly drained down the dregs. —GEOFFREY DENNIS (op. cit.)

IT HAS been good news to an immense number of people to learn on the highest authority that Her Majesty the Queen does not smoke. —

—Christian Herald (c. 1940).

A CLERGYMAN on the 1937 coronation: 'The coronation was a miracle which might save civilization... God rarely intervenes in history, but the few occasions when He does are, as one would expect, among the greatest events recorded in its pages.'

* * *

PRINCESS Anne is reported to be alarmingly unafraid of horses. She has been seen to wander up nervelessly to very large horses who are not aware of her royal status. —Daily Express
AT A two-roomed cottage near Glamis Castle, a white-haired mother spoke proudly yesterday of a little service she had been able to give the Royal Family. She revealed that 34 years ago she agreed to her baby son taking the birth registration number of 13 so it should not go to Princess Margaret. —Sunday Express (c. 1964)

Fare Fighting

in Glasgow

AS REPORTED in our issues of 14 and 28 May, the London-based "Fare Fight" campaign intends to carry on its campaign to encourage London Transport users to resist the (further) increases scheduled for next month. The prosecution which has taken place to date resulted in Piers Corbyn being conditionally discharged for a year and ordered to pay £ 100. costs. He is appealing against this.

"Fare Fight" said "A cheap (or free) and efficient service will only be obtained as a result of mass direct action". Should transport workers attempt to carry the campaign further than the "Save Our Services" lobbying by LT workers, they will certainly need the assurance of determined support by the users of the services. The sad experience of Glasgow bus crews is reported in the SOS special issue of "the Platform (paper of the London Transport Rank & File Organisation)":

"The campaign by Glasgow bus workers to refuse to collect fare increases has been sabotaged the day after it started. . . . The decision to call the campaign off was forced through by senior officials, Transport Workers Union. . . .

". . . Shop stewards from all the Glasgow garages voted unanimously to urge members to refuse to collect the new 26p fare and to limit the maximum fare to 18p. Later mass meetings were held in every garage and nine out of the eleven voted to accept this recommendation.

"The Greater Glasgow Passenger Transport Executive threatened to discipline any bus worker who went ahead. . . . On Sunday, when the new fares were supposed to come into effect, the vast majority of bus workers . . . answered the threat by collecting only an 18p maximum. . . .

"But that day McDonald and other TGWU officials met the Glasgow District Bus Committee. They later announced that the fare fight would be called off on Monday night because of the threat of legal action. . . ."

FARE FIGHT is at Flat 3, 76 Sydney Street, London E1.

in Sheffield

SHEFFIELD Bus Undertaking makes a profit, is holding fares at their present level and intends to do so until into the 1980s. All Old Age Pensioners travel free, and schoolchildren for 2p, anywhere. Consequently the service is widely used.

The Government, because the undertaking will not raise fares, is withdrawing the grant which is given to transport systems to subsidise social need.

Nonetheless, the undertaking is not raising fares. They have obviously stepped out of the vicious circle of higher fares-less usage-higher fares . . .

M.A.

ROBERT TRESSELL, whose book *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* both expressed and inspired early trade union struggles for betterment of wretched conditions in the building trades, did not live to enjoy the benefits of the struggle. He died of T.B. in 1911, in a workhouse, and was buried in a paupers' grave in Walton cemetery (Liverpool).

Robert Tressell — a late Remembrance

Next Saturday, June 18 some of Tressell's more fortunate heirs will meet at that grave to pay tributes, to be led by TUC general secretary Len Murray and TGWU's Jack Jones, to the pauper Robert Philip Noonan, who was Robert Tressell. A monument is to be erected on the grave, paid for by contributions from trade unions (notably UCATT, which in present day terms would be Tressell's union), and to be fashioned with tools dating back to the period when Tressell worked with them.

Paupers were not buried singly in their anonymous graves. One wonders if it will be possible to remember Tressell's companions on the memorial.

*Reprinted in recent years, and well worth reading for its rich and real language, its un-sentimental sentiment, strong humour and total authenticity.

words of Comfort

"WHAT YOU DO as an anarchist is what you do for yourself. It's basically not the view that man being what he is can't dispense with government, but rather that in the present world man being what he is cannot not dispense with government. Because government is increasingly involved with psycho-

pathology and less and less with purpose.

"I think this is being borne out by the fact that de-centralist solutions to things are coming to be popular in the most unlikely places. There is a big difference between private profit and mutual aid, and between laissez faire and direct action. But if you go far enough to the Right, you tend to go round

the back of the Earth and arrive on the far Left. So there may be common ground, and I sometimes talk about anarchic solutions to people here* and they think I'm talking about capitalism. And they have a big surprise coming to them!"

---ALEX COMFORT, quoted in
The Observer magazine
29 May, 1977. (* USA)

ROYAL FLUSH (cont)

'Even at the Palace, yesterday's joint is today's rissoles'

"We all share the Archbishop's regret that Edward VIII insists on marrying the woman with whom he happened to fall in love." —Letter in *Sunday Referee* (1937)
MEN IT WAS as well as women, who another time knelt down and picked up and sacramentally consumed the crumbs that had fallen from his table, and on yet another occasion fought for and sucked clean the duck-bones Edward

had left on his princely plate.

—GEOFFREY DENNIS (op. cit.)
SERIOUS MINDED King George VI has many qualities to endear him to the people. He is a better boxer than was Edward VIII, plays a stronger game of tennis—though he is left-handed with the racquet—enjoys grouse shooting and has a mechanical hent.

—*News Review* (1937).



A SPOKESMAN at Buckingham Palace denied that the Prince would be beating the incomes freeze. 'It is not that sort of income,' he said. 'It simply means he will get a larger share of the revenue from his estates than he did previously.'

—*Sunday Express*

PRINCESS ELIZABETH will not get the £ 4 free grant which the State makes to mothers on the birth of their babies, because Prince Philip has not paid enough contributions on his National Health Insurance Card. —*The People* (c. 1947)
THE QUEEN keeps as close a housewife's eye on her 600 rooms as the average woman does on her five or six.

—*Daily Mail* (c. 1958).

Compiled by J.R. Acknowledgements are made to authors cited and the *New Statesman* collections *This England* 1937-1968.

Red Brigades (cont)

between the Red Brigades of north and central Italy with their "intellectual-Catholic-workerist" background and the "wretched of the earth" of the choleric south was an unprecedented symbol of revolutionary unity that must have sent a chill down many an Establishment spine. But it did not mean an absorption of one group by the other. According to the Red Brigades "the working class remains the central and ruling nucleus of the communist revolution and it would be an extremely serious error to think that the students and emarginati could substitute it with their own theory ..."

The Br-Nap alliance entered a third stage, involving the attempt to form an "armed warring party" of the various groups which had sprung up in the wake of the Communists' "historic compromise", and made their presence felt during the recent Rome University occupation and street fighting. In the words of L. Lanza (2): "For convenience these new rebels are generally defined as 'the autonomy area' or 'the autonomists.' Never has a political term been so vague. Autonomy today means very many things often contradictory among themselves. The papers 'Rosso', 'A/traverso' and 'Wcw' only represent a part of this area which often acts unpredictably and takes refuge from categorical definitions. This 'area' is perhaps the only political element in which the example of the B.R. and N.A.P. has a certain resonance ... Varied in their theoretical position the new rebels join in a political praxis that breaks with the lines they were accustomed to. The spread of firearms and decisive reply to the armed attacks of the police indicate a new will to fight, which originates as a reply to the aggravation of the conditions of life of the young, and the social disintegration of the great cities."

It is in the interests of the powers that be to stress the links between these new groups - the autonomists, the proletarian "angry boys", the "freaks", the metropolitan indians, the women's guerilla groups and "new witches", Workers' Autonomy and so on - with the older Nap and Red Brigades. In many cases, though not in all, such links are doubtful. But mention has been made of a group within the Red Brigades called the "Superclan", whose task is reportedly to bring the different groups together in a common front. Their efforts have been helped considerably for the reasons mentioned above, and by a situation where the perennial financial, political and bureaucratic scandals have joined with high inflation and unemployment, and the continuing tragedy of Seveso. Not only a human and ecological tragedy, but a truly political crime.

Now, as the next attempt is made to try the Red Brigades and a new court gingerly prepares to take up the State's cudgels, the talk is of how sharp those cudgels should be. An age-old argument between liberals and conservatives concerns the introduction (or not) of a new packet of emergency laws. Yet already, in their absence, the police have "made a Santiago of Rome."

The Red Brigades have described the actions and repressive techniques of the State both in and outside prison as "political genocide." This is something for which they were no doubt prepared back in the early seventies when war was first declared. They may indeed be annihilated if the "armed warring party" does not

win the day.



But is this possible, given the evident lack of coherence among some of the groups and the absence (so far) of solid working class solidarity? And what would it mean? Here the same anarchist critique applies as to the Red Army Fraction in Germany. Not a critique of "urban guerilla warfare" in itself (expropriation, sabotage, etc) but of methods very costly in terms of life, including their own; methods tending through essentially vanguard actions to the reinforcement of the State and to an over-concentration, indeed obsession, with logistics and ballistics to the detriment and actual discouragement of ideas and ideological analysis. Like the RAF the Red Brigades envisage an "armed proletarian power", achieved through the destruction of corporative capitalism by revolutionary workers, to whom its true face has been revealed. But they have seemed so far unable to throw off a stale, archaic sounding jargon. In addition, the central nucleus, these very workers, is still lacking, whereas those the Br have tended to disdain have been attracted to them.

On these various points there is debate among anarchists in Italy as elsewhere; a debate that may grow with the increase in the number of dissidents emerging from within the guerilla network. In the meantime it is vital that the anarchists put concrete questions to the new revolutionary groups, and that they provide their own answers in action and where possible, in collaboration with them. Again, to use Lanza's words: "our task is to provoke the provokers to prevent these new rebels too falling into the logic of authoritarianism."

G. F.

Note

- (1) In the magazine *Lavoro Politico*, 1967
- (2) "A" rivista anarchica, april 1977

BARCELONA

ANARCHISTS DEMAND AMNESTY FOR ALL

ON SUNDAY 15 MAY 60-70 anarchists filled the main street in Barcelona and blocked it for twenty minutes—with the additional help of a busdriver who parked his bus sideways so that it blocked the street to traffic. The demonstrators having made their purpose known dispersed before the riot police arrived.

ALL ANARCHISTS ARE INVITED TO
SHEFFIELD FOR A PICNIC
ON SATURDAY JUNE 25TH AT 1 pm
FOX HOUSE : PEAK NATIONAL PARK
(Within easy reach by public transport
from Sheffield).

Crash pads for Friday & Saturday nights.

COME AND

- See Sheffield's Beautiful Countryside
- Drink Sheffield's Beautiful Bitter
- Meet Sheffield's Beautiful Anarchists

Details from Tikka, 4 Havelock Square,
Sheffield 4.

1977 NORTH AMERICAN ANARCHIST CONFERENCE

The U.S.-Canadian annual anarchist meeting will be held this year from July 29th to 31st at Wildcat Mountain State Park in Wisconsin.

Wildcat Mountain State Park is a forested area about 135 miles E.-N.E. of Milwaukee. The camp site in the park has been reserved for this meeting. All anarchists on the North American continent are invited to attend this meeting to plan the tactics and strategy of achieving the free society'. This conference, as last year's, sees as one of its main tasks "to make anarchism believable"

There is a log cabin available for a few people, and some tents will be provided, but people are encouraged to bring their own tents, sleeping bags, blankets etc., and are urged not to forget to bring flashlamp and lanterns.

Contributions to defray expenses, and enquiries for further details to:

Milwaukee-SRAF,
P.O. Box 92-246, Milwaukee,
Wisconsin 53202, U.S.A.

(or New York to Freespace/Alternate U, 339
Lafayette St., N.Y.C., 10012.)

Information regarding the history of anarchism in Scotland is required by Charlie Baird, 122 Beneray Street, Glasgow G22, 7AU. Phone: 041 336 7895.

Freedom

In view of the problems of production arising from the bank holiday period, we hope you will forgive the lack of substance in this issue! But we should like to take this opportunity to remind our readers of the need FREEDOM shares with its fellow papers for regular contributions in the form of articles, news items and cartoons. eds

OBITUARIES:

Marcelino Garcia (1893~1977)

WITH THE passing of Marcelino Garcia on April 1, 1977, the Spanish anarchist movement in America lost one of its most dedicated and articulate spokesmen. The son of a Spanish socialist, Garcia was born in 1893 in the village of San Martin, near Oviedo in Asturias, "where all the rebels come from," he remarked. "As far as I am concerned," he said, explaining his attraction to anarchism, "I was born an anarchist. It was in my nature, my emotions. I didn't have to read about it—it was within me." As a boy of seven or eight he already admired the anarchists. "I saw in them men who were willing to fight for the poor. Angiollo, for example. He once came to my town. He was my angel!"

Garcia came to the United States at the age of thirteen. At fifteen, he was a miner in the coal fields of West Virginia. But soon he took to the road, "like a gypsy," as he put it. Moving from place to place, he worked at a variety of jobs, from stevedore and carpenter to furnace-stoker and elevator-operator. By 1925 he had settled in New York, which he came to regard as his favourite spot on earth, apart from the town where he was born.

It was in New York that Garcia met Pedro Esteve, editor of *Cultura Obrera* and the foremost Spanish anarchist in America. As a young man, before emigrating to the New World, Esteve had accompanied Errico Malatesta on an evangelical tour of Spain, and Garcia considered him "the greatest influence in my life." After Esteve's untimely death in 1925, Garcia emerged as a leading figure within the *Cultura Obrera* Group. For more than two decades he edited *Cultura Proletaria*, which succeeded *Cultura Obrera* as the principal Spanish anarchist journal in America. He was also a popular speaker at anarchist picnics and meetings. An intense figure on the platform, with jet black hair and flowing black moustache, he spoke in a quiet, lilting voice that could rise to a thundering roar, holding his audience spellbound.

During the 1920s and 30s, Garcia was active in the campaign to save Sacco and Vanzetti, in the *Solidaridad Internacional Antifascista*, and in other libertarian causes. In 1937 he spent several weeks in Spain (where he met Emma Goldman) and provided an eyewitness description of the social revolution to the readers of *Cultura Proletaria*. However, with the victory of General Franco and the outbreak of world war, the Spanish anarchist movement in America fell into decline.

1952 *Cultura Proletaria* suspended publication, and a few years later Garcia's beloved companion developed a fatal blood clot which left her paralysed. Giving up his job in New York, Garcia moved to a small house in Palmerton, Pennsylvania, where he nursed his wife until her death after five years of suffering. Tragedy struck again in 1975 when his son, who lived with him at Palmerton, was killed in an accident. Last April 1, Marcelino himself passed away in his eighty-fourth year, bringing to an end his long and active career as a libertarian socialist.

Gentle yet militant, jovial yet deeply serious about his cause, Garcia exemplified the highest ideals of the movement to which he devoted his life. When I visited him at Palmerton in 1971, he spoke of the prospects for a libertarian future. Although conditions had changed since he entered the movement, he kept faith with his exalted ideal: "Anarchism has a glorious future. In three or four years it will rise again in Spain. The doors are opening."

PAUL AVRICH.

Jack MacPherson

JACK MACPHERSON, member of the Syndicalist Workers' Federation and the old Anarchist Federation of Britain, died on April 19th of a stroke.

Though Jack was unable to get about owing to his illness (he had been given only two years to live when he was 14 years old), he followed events within the movement with keen interest and was an inspiration to the many comrades who knew him. Neither a smoker nor a drinker, Jack's two main passions in life were anarchism and the early 19th Century operatic composers of Italy, his favourite personalities being Verdi, Donizetti—and Bakunin.

For many years he and his wife Margaret have provided a centre at their home in Dukinfield, Lancashire, where matters relating to anarchism could be discussed. Many are the comrades who have been put up at their house. Margaret was also an SWF member, and involved herself in meetings, correspondence, and local disputes in the textile industry. This last year since Jack has had two strokes has not been an easy one for her.

All our sympathies go out to Margaret now, and the other members of Jack's family, and our thanks for providing accommodation, help and comfort over the years to militants in the movement.

B. B.

Anarchist Newspapers

ZERO

ZERO, No.1, June 1977, 20p. C/o Rising Free, 182 Upper St, Islington, London N1. An anarchist/anarca-feminist, 12-page monthly produced by a mixed collective, mainly from East London, in the hope of contributing to "the emergence of a new wave anarchist movement." There is a good centre page containing a collective statement on Anarchism/Feminism that sees the revolutionary feminist perspective as essentially anarchist and criticises anarchist practice as contradicting its own theory by not being actively feminist. There is an article by Philip Sansom on Marie Louise Berneri, and other items cover Spain (front page), Ireland, Germany, Italy and Czechoslovakia. There is a good review of Paul Foot's *Why you should be a Socialist* by Bob Potter.

The Match

THE MATCH! our American contemporary, (P.O. Box 3488, Tucson, Arizona 85722) made a welcome appearance in February 1977 after what the editor describes as "Only a Pause", due to publication problems. The February issue is the last we have received so it appears that these problems continue. It would be a pity to lose such an anarchist paper which, amongst other things, has constantly published fierce anti-clerical material. Needless to say your support and solidarity is needed now more than ever.

La Banca Rota

LA BANCA ROTA, a review begun recently by the bank employees' group of the CNT, in Barcelona. At present it restricts itself to critiques and general commentary, without news items. The March and April issues include articles on the relationship between the Spanish government and banking, anti-psychiatry and communications. We look forward to a subsequent issue tackling the question of the bank in the anarchist revolution.

Pamphlet

BLACK BEAR PAMPHLET 2. Black Bear is a group of feminists and anarchists who wish to publish and produce literature that contributes to the growth of the anarca-feminist movement. After publishing their initial pamphlet, *Anarcho-Feminism: Two Statements*, Black Bear has now reprinted Lynne Farrow's *Feminism as Anarchism* which first appeared in 1974 as an article in the New York feminist magazine *Aurora*. It puts forward the claim that "feminists are the only existing protest groups that can honestly be called practicing Anarchists." This pamphlet is available, price 20p from Freedom Bookshop.

Black Bear welcomes suggestions and ideas for further pamphlets. The group next hopes to publish Peggy Kornegger's *Anarchism: The Feminist Connection*. Contact: Black Bear, c/o 76 Peckham Road, London SE5.



SEND THIS FORM to FREEDOM PRESS, 84B Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.

1 year (26 issues)	£ 5.00 (\$10.00)
6 months (13 issues)	£ 2.50 (\$5.00)
Six issues	£ 1.15 (\$2.30)

name

address

.

FREEDOM CONTACTS ^{Page}

WE WELCOME News, articles, letters, reviews. Latest date for receipt of copy for next REVIEW section is Saturday 11 June, and for NEWS section Monday 20 June.

NEXT DESPATCHING date is Thursday 23 June Come and help from 4 pm onwards. You are welcome each Thursday 4-8 pm for folding (or despatching) session and informal get-together.

GROUPS

ABERYSTWYTH. Mike Sheehan, 59 North Parade, Aberystwyth, Dyfed. Anarchists in other parts of Wales interested in federation please contact.

BOLTON. Contact 6 Stockley Ave., Harwood, Bolton (tel. 36716)

CAMBRIDGE. Contact Ron Stephan, 41 York Street, Cambridge

CORBYP anarchists write 7 Cresswell Walk, Corby, Northants.

COVENTRY. Peter Corne, c/o Students union University of Warwick, Coventry.

DURHAM---no contact at present

EAST ANGLIAN Libertarians. Martyn Everett, 11 Gibson Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex.

EXETER. Geoff Minshull, 129 Fore Street, Exeter (tel. 33084).

LEAMINGTON & Kenilworth: An. Gp. c/o 42A Bath Street, Leamington Spa.

LEEDS. Tony Kearney, 4 Ingle Row, Leeds 7.

LEICESTER. Peter and Jean Miller, 41 Norman Road (tel. 549642)

MANCHESTER. Contact Al on 061-224 3028

NEWCASTLE. Martin Spence/Neil Jarman, 91 Beaconsfield St., Arthur's Hill, N'castle 4

OXFORD. Martin Harper, Keble College

PORTSMOUTH. Caroline Cahm, 2 Chadderton Gardens, Pembroke Park, Old Portsmouth

ST. ALBANS, John Morton, 21 St. Peter's Rd St. Albans, Herts.

SWANSEA. Keith Sowerby, House 35, Student Village, Landrefollian, Swansea

THAMES VALLEY. Adele Dawson, Maymeade, 6 Congress Rd. Maidenhead. (tel. 062 2974)

LONDON FEDERATION of Anarchist Groups: Anarchist Black Cross, 123 Upper Tollington Park, N.4. (691 6533)

Anarchy Collective, 29 Grosvenor Ave. N.5. (tel. 359 4794)

Brixton Anarcho-Situationists, 8 Heywood House, Tulse Hill, SW2 (tel. 674 6402)

Clapham. 3 Belmont Rd. SW4 (tel. 622 8961)
East London Libertarians, 123 Lathom Rd. E.6. (tel. 552 3985)

Freedom, 84B Whitechapel High St., Angel Alley, E.1. (tel. 247 9249)

Hackney Black & Red, 84 Brougham Rd., E.8 (tel. 249 7042)

Kingston Libertarians, 13 Denmark Rd., Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey (tel. 549 2564)

South London College An. Gp. c/o Students' Union, South London Coll., Knights Hill, West Norwood, SE 27 (tel. 674 7886)

Zero, phone 555 6287.

SCOTTISH Libertarian Federation:

Aberdeen: Blake, c/o APP, 163 King Street
Dundee: Mike Malet, 1 Lynnewood Place,
Edinburgh: Gibson, 7 Union Street.

(tel. 557 1532 (not as previously given))

Glasgow: Baird, 122 Benneray St. Glasgow G22 (tel. 336 7895)

Stirling: D. Tymes, 99 Rosebank, Sauchie, Clacks.

AUSTRALIA

Canberra: Alternative Canberra Group, 10 Beltana Rd. Pialligo, ACT 2809

Victoria: La Trobe Libertarian Socialists, c/o SRC, La Trobe University, Bundocra, Vic. 3083
Libertarian Soc. Fed. of Aust. c/o 4 Reservoir St., Reservoir, Vic. 3073 (branches other areas)
New South Wales: P. Stones, P.O. Box 26, Warrawong, N.S.W.

Sydney Fed. of Australian Anarchists
Box 92, Broadway, 2007, Australia.

NEW ZEALAND

The anarchist movement can be contacted on:
P.O. Box 2042, AUCKLAND
P.O. Box 22-607 CHRISTCHURCH
International Books, 123 Willis St. Wellington
Daybreak Bookshop, P.O. Box 5424, Dunedin.

U.S.A.

NEW YORK: Libertarian Book Club, Box 842
G.P.O.. New York 10001

S.R.A.f.: Freespace/Alternate University,
339 Lafayette St., New York City NY 10012
MISSOURI: Columbia Anarchist League, P.O.
Box 380, Columbia, Mo. 65201

GERMANY

Anarchist Federation of Baden, Postfach:
ABF Info-Büro, Postfach 161, 717 Schwäbisch
Hall, Germany

MEETINGS

THURSDAY June 9. First mtg. of Leamington & Kenilworth anarchist group at 42a Bath Place Leamington Spa. (try ringing The Other Branch bookshop to find out time).

SATURDAY June 11. London. "Revolution and History" (speaker from Solidarity). One of a series of seminars organised jointly by Social Revolution, Solidarity, and AWA(London), with the aim to help libertarian communists clarify their ideas on what means and activities are best suited to modern conditions. The mtgs. are on alternate Sats., 2-5 pm at the Drill Hall, Chenies St., London WC1 (off Tottenham Court Rd. Tube: Goodge St.)

BIRMINGHAM Libertarian Socialists meet Sundays 8pm at the "Fox & Grapes", Freeman St. (next to Moor St. Station) and no longer at the Peace Centre. Contact address Pete Le Mare, 2 Florence Place, Ombersley Rd. Birmingham 12.

WEEKEND 17-19 June. Federation of Anarchist Students conference. For further information write The Anarchist Association, c/o Students Union, Univ. of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL
Crash pads. Conf. fee 50p (any surplus to CNT)

WEEKEND 18-19 June London. BWNIC general mtg. at Pax Christi Centre, Blackfriars Hall Southampton Rd., N.W.5. Starts 11.30 am with informal introductory mtg for new supporters (Sat.) For further information or sleeping place Fri. or Sat. write to BWNIC c/o 5 Caledonian Rd. London N1 9DX

THURSDAY June 30. London. "Anarchism and Socialism". Albert Meltzer visits Hampstead branch of the Socialist Party of Great Britain. Questions & Discussions. All welcome at "The Enterprise" pub, Chalk Farm High Rd. (opposite Chalk Farm tube and The Roundhouse. Commencing 8 pm

MIDLANDS Anarchist Federation conf. 25th June, at Warwick. Enquiries to Steve Feller, 7 Waverley Road, Kenilworth, Warks.

FARE FIGHT. Weekly mtgs. now held at Squatters Action Council office, 5 Huntley St. WC1 every Thurs. 8 pm

LAND FOR THE PEOPLE. Mrgs. every Tuesday, 8A Leighton Crescent, London NW5 (Kentish Town). Upstairs at No.8. Tel. 267 1184 or 485 3572.

HYDE PARK Speakers Corner (Marble Arch). Anarchist Forum alternate Sundays 1 pm. Speakers, listeners & hecklers welcomed.

COVENTRY. All anarchists in Coventry wishing to meet regularly please contact John England, 48 Spencer Ave., Earlsdon, Coventry
NORTH WEST Anarchist Federation. For mtgs. etc. write 6 Stockley Ave., Harwood, Bolton (tel. Bolton 387516).

ABROAD

NEW YORK. Freespace Alternate U (339 Lafayette St. NYC) June 10: Paul Mayer: "Political Prisoners in America Today"

CAMPING INTERNATIONAL LIBERTAIRE ECOLOGIQUE. At Ronse-Renaix, Belgium. JULY 15-AUGUST 15. Contact Eric Sobrie, Zonnerstraat 3, 9792 Wortgen Potegem, Belgium. (N.B. This is this summer's International Anarchist Camp, in previous years held in France.)

DESIRES

SUMMER holidays: Two French comrades want somewhere to sleep, eat and meet other anarchists, and would also like help to "find a little job". Write Jean-Pierre Laudignon, 10 rue Henri Cavallier, 47500 FUMEL, France
Hasn't anybody got a single room centralish London to offer John O'Connor, 167 Worcester Rd., Bootle 20, Merseyside. He requires minimal amenities and is willing to abstain from meat.

Anarchist of substantially Tolstoyan mind seeks like minds in London. Also seeking London anarchists of ANY tendency whose objection to the nudity taboo is not merely a matter of cold principle but—burning resentment. Please reply in writing only (a SAE would oblige) to Desmond Hunter, 4 Swinton Street, London WC1. Or contact at the "Love v. Power" mtg every Sunday 3 - 5.30 pm at Speakers' Corner
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES Liberation group. Enquiries write c/o 5 Caledonian Road, London, N.1.

PRISONERS

Mike Murphy (C01039) HM Prison, Ashwell, Oakham, Leics.

John Nightingale (336645) HM Prison Parkhurst nr. Newport, Isle of Wight.

DUBLIN anarchists Bob Cullen, Des Keane, Columba Longmore. Military Detention Centre Curragh Camp, Co. Kildare, Eire.

MARIE MURRAY and **NOEL MURRAY** (life sentences). Defence Groups: London c/c 29 Grosvenor Avenue, N.5. Dublin: 155 Church Rd., Celbridge, Co. Kildare, Eire.

PRESS FUND

19 May - 1 June

WOLVERHAMPTON: J.L. £ 2; J.K.W. 20p;
BATH: T.L.J. 50p; London SE3: B.J.B. £ 5.50;
STOCKHOLM: S.L. 50p; LONDON WC2: B.T. 20p; N.S.W. Australia: G.B. 14p; **GLASGOW:** S.M. 30p; **ECCLES:** J.M. 50p; In Shop: D.B. 40p; M.R. 25p, A.A. 10p; Anons 90p.

Total £ 7.49
Previously acknowledged £ 657.71

TOTAL to DATE : £ 665.20

FREEDOM'S *Anarchist Review*

4 June '77

TECHNOLOGY OF POLITICAL CONTROL

THE TECHNOLOGY OF POLITICAL CONTROL by Carol Ackroyd, Karen Margolis, Jonathan Rosenhead and Tim Shallow (Penguin (£1.25))

THE BRITISH Society of Social Responsibility in Science was set up in 1969 (1968 according to some sources) in reaction to the stuffiness of the traditional British Association for the Advancement of Science. (BAAS has a lot to answer for, not least their pamphlet *Science and the Police* on the issues dealt with in this book. Any organisation that can have Magnus Pike as a front person must have something wrong with it.) A split soon developed in the new society, between the prominent academics who gave it respectability and the more radical members. This is apparent in the account of their conference on "The Social Impact of Modern Biology (Routledge and Kegan Paul). Eventually the respectable wing gave up and left. BSSRS has never achieved the impact of their American counterpart, "Science for People" (The British group use this name for their magazine and I remember some talk of changing the group's name.)

by a look at the situation in Britain generally including the work of military theorists such as Clutterbuck and, especially, Kitson. The final section is a more detailed presentation of the various technologies, including lessons from abroad concerning information gathering, computer data banks, etc. (these latter aspects are more extensively dealt with in Tony Bunyan's *The Political Police in Britain* (Quartet).

The book gives a clear and comprehensive outline of all these points. It was even picked and praised on the BBC's "Read all about it" by "Mad Mitch" Mitchell, who should know what he is talking about. Colonel Mitchell did not offer any detailed political analysis or even any personal anecdotes about his use of these methods. However I am glad that he feels worried by possible inroads into his privacy. He, supported by the fawning Melvin Bragg, thinks that it is a pity that "extremists" (i.e. BSSRS) spoil their argument by shrill paranoia. In my opinion the chief fault of the book is that it is not extreme enough. David Dickson who, reviewing it in *New Scientist*, regretted that it did not include reference to the control function of technology in the factory or in the home, has a valid point, but this is another vast area, needing a book of its own, one which, in fairness, the authors did not set out to write. I am more concerned with the solutions offered. The Authors are well aware that Communist states apply these technologies at least as assiduously as others, but consider that this is only because the Russian economy was "underdeveloped" in 1917 and that "drastic emergency organisation" led to the "indiscriminate recruitment of a large number of administrators "who gradually usurped political power." Elsewhere "socialist democracy and Leninist principles" are valued. It is a pity that this otherwise excellent book can reach no further conclusion than that "these techniques are nasty, but would, by definition, not be needed in a truly socialist society".

DAVID PEERS



Army/police cooperation in practice: Heathrow.

In 1974 BSSRS (along with two members of the Troops Out Movement) published a pamphlet *The New Technology of Repression*, subtitled "Lessons from Ireland", describing the methods of control being developed in Northern Ireland and pointing out their possible application to the rest of Britain. There was also a BBC 2 "Open Door" programme, a tape of which is available from the group. The Society submitted a report on the use of sensory deprivation torture, which was completely ignored by Lord Parker's whitewash. This book is an extension of these ideas. It is divided into four sections, describing the development of the new technology (they use "technology" to mean "any device or method which exploits knowledge from any of the sciences from physics through to psychology") and its application in Northern Ireland. They make the point that despite the official claims that such methods avoid the use of bullets, the practice involves tear gas, "baton rounds", etc. and live bullets. The second section surveys possible routes to a British "Strong State", followed



Tea Parties With Toast

TORTURE IN GREECE, The First Torturers' Trial 1975. Amnesty International Publications, 1977. 85p.

ON 7 AUGUST 1975 fourteen officers and eighteen soldiers of non-commissioned rank were put on trial before the Athens Permanent Court Martial on charges of torture during interrogation. This torturers' trial was the first major trial of its kind to be held since Nurnberg, and it set a precedent by which governments can legally wash their hands of the dirt by which they or their predecessors have maintained themselves in office. The court martial sentenced three of the senior commanding officers and torturers of ESA, the military police, to sentences of between 20-23 years' imprisonment, while many of the defendants got off lightly with short prison terms, fines and acquittals. This has been the general situation with the subsequent trials, all of which have only reluctantly been set in motion by the Greek government after a series of private civil suits.

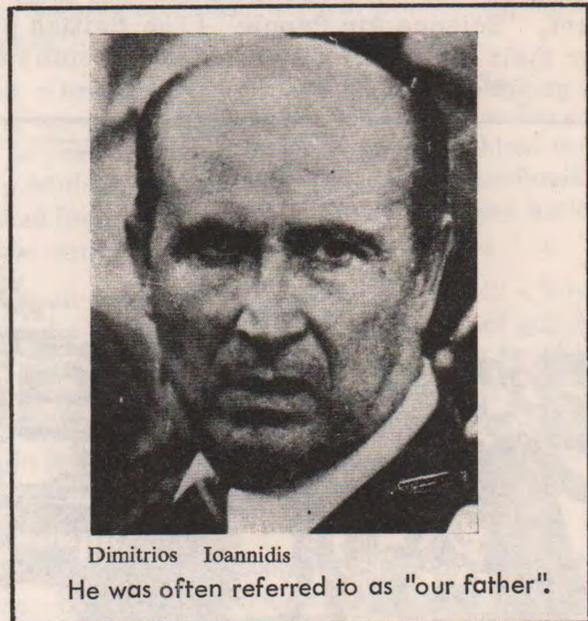


Two faces of torture: Theofiloyannakos and Hajizisis.

The Amnesty report begins with an examination of ESA's pattern of torture. (A "tea party with toast" was the charming phrase for the method of beating and "standing" together - standing being the practice of keeping victims standing in the corner of their cells, sometimes on one foot, usually at attention, for several days on end. Other forms of torture were sexually orientated, or involved the hanging of prisoners by the wrists, the pulling out of toe and finger nails, different methods of inflicting burns, use of electric shock, etc). It goes on to explore the background of the ESA officers and soldiers involved and the trial proceedings themselves. It gives a useful summary of the history behind the Colonels' coup in 1967, but is particularly interesting on the motives of the officers and soldiers. Both lots of defendants were concerned to shift the blame on to the others' shoulders, and the soldiers' defence is strikingly similar to that of the Nurnberg trial defendants. Sometimes the underlying antagonism between officers and soldiers led to heated exchanges in court, to sudden unexpected outbursts of anger and bitterness on the part of the soldiers. The officers tried to stand by the "dignity" of their rank or to look magnanimous by pretending to intercede on behalf of the lower ranks and their misdeeds. Before the living evidence of such as Major Spyros Moustaklis, made mute and partially paralysed by torture, they continued to insist that the victims might have had a cuff or two but, as far as they were concerned, that was all.

How did it happen? What emerges is a general pattern in which social and economic inequality is ruthlessly exploited by political interest. Officers and soldiers of poor and humble origins, from some remote frontier or village, attracted by the prestige of an Athens posting and the social privileges offered by ESA, subjected then to an intense ideological indoctrination (in the case of the officers) or (as with the soldiers) to a process of torture and brutalisation that could at times equal the prisoners'. "I was called up in April 1973" says a soldier, Kambanas. "I was in perfect health and was thrilled at the prospect. Now, two years later, I am in despair. My health is broken and my name is stigmatised. From the moment we arrived at KESA from the Basic Train-

ing Centre, the torture began. They snatched us from the army lorries and threw us down like sacks. The beating began and they made us eat the straps from our berets ... They beat us with belts and clubs ... The beating never stopped ... They beat us in the lorries, in the lecture halls and during the lessons ... I thought of asking to be transferred from ESA, but I realised that it was as much as my life was worth ... I beat prisoners to save myself ..." The prisoners themselves, lawyers, students and the like, came in general from a higher social class. Their privileged background seems to have brought out all the suppressed fury and hatred of their persecutors, once they were given free rein. One evening the senior commanding officer Hajizisis called a prisoner called Pangalos to his office. "He showed me his shoe-soles, which were worn, and said, 'You, the upper middle classes, are wrecking society. You earn in a month what we earn in a year. But it is we who will re-make society.'" This fundamental bitterness was ideologically channelled into a rabid anti-communism and national pride under the name of enosis and "Helleno-Christian society."



Dimitrios Ioannidis
He was often referred to as "our father".

Among several other factors Amnesty is critical of the failure of the court to take account of the broader issues of political responsibility. But as a liberal organisation concerned with law reform and the application of international law, it cannot go beyond the pious hope that governments will mend their ways - and wash their hands with suitable energy and decorum. It is left to us to point out that if, in Amnesty's words, "torture has become a tool of state policy in an increasing number of nations", that is so because torture is the inevitable tool of a state that must struggle to survive.

There is no question of the value of reports of this nature (though, as in the case of the recent Danish Amnesty experiments on pigs, some of us may not agree with all their methods of investigation). The value of this report lies not only in its factual record of methods of repression and control, but as a study of the attitudes, the social inequalities and class issues behind them. Where our task is radically different from that of organisations like Amnesty is in the insistence on the basic equation between repressive techniques and governmental power. It is utopian to hope, as Amnesty hopes, that a structure of torture may be abolished without the abolition of that structure of power which must set it in motion against an opposition of any consequence. It is not the imprisonment of the agents of the State that is at issue, but the destruction of the State itself.

THE NATURE OF BRITISH SYNDICALISM

Book Review

BRITISH SYNDICALISM 1900-1914, Bob Holton, Pluto Press, £2.95.

SYNDICALISM IS ABOUT control. It is concerned with how people try to get control over their own lives, and essentially applies itself to the problem of how control and decision making in a society can be exercised from the bottom up.

In this broad sense the syndicalist alternative often manifests itself spontaneously and unconsciously in the every day lives of most of us. It is also an underlying factor in most of the radical historical movements both during and since the industrial revolution. However, as a conscious political and social movement dedicated to the pursuit of workers' control over the economy and society by direct action it is usually studied in relation to its contribution to British labour history in the first 14 years of this century up to the start of World War I.

SYNDICALISM'S IMPACT 1900-14

British Syndicalism 1900-1914 by Bob Holton is an attempt to look at the nature of the British movement and to challenge some of the distortions produced by generations of condescending historians, intellectuals and fringe 'revolutionaries.' He argues that syndicalism, far from being anti-theory, developed a theory out of the 'generalised experience of working men and women living under capitalism.'

Up to 1914 Holton found that while British syndicalism produced no individual theorist of prominence, it was able to develop and popularise a wider understanding of several trends in capitalism. Including the tendency towards industrial concentration, the impact on skill-displacing technological change and the introduction of new strategies of social control based on state power. In combating the role of the state as a welfare agent using benefits as a way of buying-off industrial activism, the syndicalists challenged the state socialist assumption that by using the State as a sugar daddy they could smooth the way for social change.

In rejecting the extension of state power and parliamentary politics as a whole, the pre-war syndicalists did the donkey work to help set up the radical opposition to the State which grew in volume during the war.

Perhaps the syndicalists at that time did underestimate the ability of the State to absorb and manipulate the trade unions, believing that rank and file pressure could keep the unions out of the hands of the State. Also the pre-war syndicalists failed to see the importance of independent workplace organisations, later to become vital in the wartime shop stewards' movement and the workers' committees. This can be justified by the fact that the syndicalists were strongest in industries like mining in which the union structures approximated very closely to the workplace organisation and had real rank and file influence over their unions anyway.

In terms of activity Holton claims that British syndicalism's status compares favourably with that of the French movement. The level of strike militancy in Britain was vast; including attacks on the homes of managers and magistrates, sabotage of plant and machinery and confrontations with civil authority, police and military. Indeed Holton reckons the strike conflict in Britain between 1910 and 1914 fully matches most of the prominent strike explosions during the French, Italian and American syndicalist eras. Syndicalist activity clearly made an impact because thousands of "ordinary" workers faced with day-to-day problems were already tending through their behaviour, towards a syndicalist perspective.

In making these points Holton is no doubt aware that attempts have been made to write off the period 1900-14 as one of trade union militancy and not of syndicalist revolt. H. Pelling has

argued this forcefully in a chapter "The Labour Unrest 1911-14" (1) and Roberts (2) claims that "Strong sentiments were expressed, but no revolutionary policy was adopted, and no new faith was embraced." The TUC did in fact vote by 1,693,000 to 48,000 for political action and centralisation of social and political questions in the Government's hands. On the spot reports, however, speak of agitation of a kind rarely seen in this country. Sir G. Askwith (3) refers to extreme violence "in Hull - women with hair streaming and half nude, reeling through the streets smashing and destroying." Phelps Brown (4) claims nothing equalled the summer of 1911: "... The seamen's strike a week before the coronation in June; a railwaymen's strike, pressed by the rank and file upon the

The Industrial Syndicalist

MONTHLY

Vol. I., No. 4. ONE PENNY. Oct., 1910.

SUBSCRIPTION.

Great Britain or Abroad ... 12 Months, 1s.6d.

All Hail,
Industrial Solidarity!

BRAVO! BRAVO! COMRADES
OF FRANCE!

No. 4 of the *Industrial Syndicalist* will deal with

The Reduction of Working Hours

Whether you work by the piece, or work by the day

Reducing the Hours Increases the Pay

The 8-hour Day: get ready for the fray in 1912.

Printed by THE PENNANT PRESS, LTD. (LTD.), Tottenham Lane, Hornsey, London, N., and Published by GUY BOWMAN, at 4, Maude Terrace, Walthamstow.

leadership - in August. Rioters shot dead by troops in Liverpool; cavalry and infantry in the streets of London; the plundering of a train in Wales ... "

By 1912, Holton argues, "important figures like Leon Jouhaux (secretary of the CGT) and Christian Cornellisen (editor of the Bulletin Internationale du Mouvement Syndicaliste) actually regarded British syndicalism as more successful than the French in revolutionary terms" (5).

SYNDICALISM AS A SOCIAL FORCE

I think it important to grasp the basic anarcho-syndicalist approach to human action as opposed to that of, say, vulgar Marxist, or monk or soldier. In the same way that a free-thinking anarchist does not live a life according to rigid rules (6), so the syndicalist considers all claims for action "on their merits." In each newly arising situation the syndicalists, by the nature of their "philosophy of action", are able to reassess their methods and theories in the light of practical experience and relate this knowledge to the changes occurring in the social structure. This avenue is not readily open to political and religious who put their faith in out-and-dried ideas, and whose activities are, in theory at least, governed by a straitjacket of dogmatic rules.

continued p 15

The Queen of Hearts

IN THIS jubilee year we see all the cards in the royal pack being played. Clubs: the display of military might and the royal implication that they were not around to preside over the liquidation of Great Britain. Spades: the political implications of that speech on devolution and the royal reluctance to disclose shareholdings. (Like any publicity seeker, the royal family clams up or shouts "unfair!" when a real embarrassing fact breaks loose.) Diamonds: the fact of the existence of royal stock-market operations and the vulgar display of tasteless objets d'art to show what they do with our money (cf. examples in the *Telegraph's Sunday Magazine*, 6 Feb. 1977). Did you know that Queen Victoria extensively bought works of art, but had no pre-Raphaelites or Impressionists—which would have been priceless now—because she didn't like them!

But hearts are trumps. How else can we explain where the adulation of royalty comes from? Certainly not from the head. Pascal once wrote: The heart has its reasons which reason cannot know. (An aspirant to a royal position—the Duchess of Windsor—wrote a book with the first four words as title.) This mindlessness reaches its crest at coronations, jubilees, royal births, marriages and engagements.

We are promised a jubilee royal baby from the Duke and Duchess of Kent. The Duke (notes the *Observer*) was born 9 October 1936. Commissioned Royal Scots Greys 1955, retired last year as lieutenant-colonel to become vice-chairman British Overseas Trade Board; other (unpaid) positions include President of Royal National Lifeboat Institution, Football Association, All-England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club. He has also found time to raise a family of three (up to now) who a beneficent providence—and the taxpayer—have seen fit to endow from birth with a substantial income.

All royal affairs receive the same sycophantic press coverage and adulation. *Affaires* tend to be treated with more discretion, or, in the popular press, by speculation decorated by broad hints and guesses since the royal family successfully keep from their subjects and taxpayers details of the most important parts of their lives. The oft-repeated history of Edward VIII and Mrs. Simpson is an object lesson in the discretion of the press when commanded.

There is always the wearying quest by royal families for a fit male heir—the royal stud farms are cluttered up with surplus fillies. Poor Queen Anne, for example, suffered an absolute orgy of childbirth in the effort to find an heir. The equally wearying quest for a suitably regal figure as a mate from the depleted ranks of royalty has largely been abandoned as an imperative. The democratic virtue of this necessity of taking mates from non-regal sources is heavily stressed.

There is a chronological morality whereby the sex life of royalty is freely discussed after a suitable lapse of time—when such discussion can have no effect. Every T. V. viewer knows about the sex-life of the Virgin Queen, of Henry VIII, of Charles II and Nell Gwynne. It is obvious now that Henry VIII's quest for a male heir and the Church's embargo against divorce conflicted sharply and that this personal problem was used by the rising mercantile class to force through a Reformation which would sanction usury—as necessary to commerce as divorce was to Henry's hope of a male heir.

*

All these historical *affaires* lend themselves to a romantic interpretation with no harm done, but when we come closer to our own day, or speculate on the more sordid side of royalty's love-life, loyal subjects will take offence.

One of the most sordid interludes of the royal progress was that of Queen Caroline, 'wife' of George IV (1820-1830). J. Morrison Davidson accused George IV of bigamy, of having married Mrs. Fitzherbert in 1785. (He also accused George IV's father, George III, of having committed the same act by marrying Hannah Lightfoot, a Quaker (!) before marrying Charlotte Sophia of Mecklenburgh Strelitz). Davidson says that in 1794 George IV "led to the altar Caroline of Brunswick.



'Led to the altar' is here used in a metaphorical sense, for George was in a condition to be led, not to lead. He was so drunk that his two royal brothers could scarce keep him on his feet." G.D.H. Cole and Raymond Postgate in a more sober history, *The Common People*, write,

"The King had long been living apart from his consort Caroline of Brunswick; and as far back as 1806 there had been a parliamentary enquiry into her conduct... This had ended in Caroline's exoneration from the graver charges, but she was censured in the report for 'levity of conduct'. ... In 1820 a far more serious issue arose. George was King; but was Caroline Queen? The King said no, and demanded from his ministers a Bill of Pains and Penalties to deprive her of her claims. Radicals and some Whigs rushed eagerly to her defence. The Government was sorely embarrassed by the scandal but the King would not allow them to give way. He had been, since 1818, collectiving evidence against her with view to divorce; the Bill was to dissolve the marriage as well as to deprive Caroline of her right to the title of Queen. The House of Lords was presented with the evidence; ... the sordid details were reported in the newspapers and made the theme of countless squibs. William Hone and the Cruikshanks devoted their talents as parodists and caricaturists to the story of Caroline's—and of the King's amours. Monarchy, rather than the Queen, seemed to be on trial. Never in history had the Republican movement been given so magnificent a chance. The House of Lords passed the Bill of Pains and Penalties by a bare majority of nine votes, and in face of such a division the Government did not dare pass the Bill on to the Commons. It had to be withdrawn but the King would not give way. On the day of the Coronation, with the issue still unsettled, Caroline tried to force her way into Westminster Abbey. She was repulsed; but the scandal remained. And then, to the immense relief of the King and Government, the Queen died, and the huge agitation which the radicals had stirred up in her support abruptly ended."

The Georges having run their scandalous course, William IV (claimed by some to have been a homosexual) succeeded. *The Times* (not the Establishment *Times* we know now) wrote in 1830 when George IV died. "There never was an individual less regretted by his fellow-creatures than this deceased King. What eye has wept for him? What heart has heard one sob of unnecessary sorrow? Seven years later on the death of William IV, *The Times* wrote "His late Majesty, though at times a jovial, and, for a king, an honest man, was a weak, ignorant, commonplace sort of person. Notwithstanding his feebleness of purpose and littleness of mind, his ignorance and his prejudices, William IV was to the last a popular sovereign, but his very popularity was acquired at the price of something like public contempt."

cont. overpage

Queen Victoria's popularity oscillated—her partnership with Albert was a romantic picture which captured all hearts; the reality was, of course, a little different. The death of Albert in 1861 (Victoria outlasted him by forty years) rallied more support for 'the widow of Windsor'. However, an over-secluded widowhood and a withdrawal from public life was overdone and exasperated public opinion and led to a growth of anti-monarchical feeling. One newspaper said (1871) 'Here we are on the very eve of a grave political crisis with a possible ministerial resignation and yet with the nonchalance of a Queen of Saturn or Jupiter, her Gracious Majesty will start in a day or two for Balmoral where she will be just about six hundred miles from the seat of Government.'

Lord Ponsonby, Secretary, and Later Keeper of the Privy Purse, to the Queen wrote of Queen Victoria's "marked and sustained infatuation for John Brown"—a gillie at Balmoral. This may account for her withdrawal from the responsibilities of the throne. This 'infatuation' even extended after Brown's death in 1883; Queen Victoria wished to write a memoir of him but was dissuaded. Cairns, monuments, memorials, inscriptions and commemorative seats were set up for John Brown after his death. Ponsonby thought that the Queen's devotion to Brown dated back to the happy days before her widowhood and 'had from that an almost sacred foundation'. Apparently Ponsonby felt it not to be of much consequence.

However this relationship seemed to be a transference from the loss of Albert and the coarse, crude tactlessness of Brown was an almost clinical attraction of opposites. In 1872 for example he wanted the Government to be turned out. He commented, 'A good thing too, the sooner they go the better. That Gladstone's /the Premier/ half a Roman and the others had better be gone. We canna have a worse lot.' When the proposed memoir of John Brown was put before Lord Ponsonby he wrote to the Queen, as his son records: "But as Sir Henry proceeds he becomes more bold and asks the Queen's forgiveness if he expresses a doubt whether this record of Your Majesty's innermost and most sacred feelings should be made public to the world. There are passages which will be misunderstood if read by strangers and there are expressions which will attract remarks of an unfavourable nature towards those who are praised; and Sir Henry cannot help fearing. . . such a publication would become distressing and painful to the Queen." The Queen, says Ponsonby, took this surprisingly well, saying she had only intended it for private circulation. But this letter killed the project and the papers were destroyed. We shall never know and can only guess what were the relations between Queen Victoria and John Brown.

Edward VII, as a reaction to Victoria's strict upbringing, lived what is usually referred to as a 'misspent youth'; Bradlaugh, the freethinker, expressed his "earnest desire that the present Prince of Wales should never dishonour the country by becoming its King". One wit commented that Edward's advocacy of the entente cordial with France (which contributed to Britain's embroilment in the 1914-18 war) was based on the King's devotion to the Moulin Rouge. He was the prototype Edwardian man-about-town, he had an eye for a horse—and a pretty woman. He loved good wine and cigars. He was involved in a libel case regarding a game of baccarat.

Oddly enough it was his illness which contributed to the popularity of royalty. His recovery from typhoid fever was put down to the direct intervention of the almighty. His coronation was postponed because of another illness. On his coronation day he provided a coronation dinner for half a million poor people; in deference to the Non-Conformists no alcohol was provided, although a popular song of the time proclaimed 'We'll all be merry/Drinking whiskey, wine and sherry/ on Coronation Day.' The coronation had 'King's weather'—that is the pathetic fallacy that a watchful being not only looks after the King's health and complies with that unreasonable series of demands droned through as 'God Save the King' but provides suitable weather for his favourites. Queen Elizabeth II note well! —it rained cats and dogs for her coronation.

Doubtless Edward VII maintained many of his early habits when he ascended the throne. He was sixty when he was crowned and reigned for only nine years. On his deathbed his wife Queen Alexandra sent for his mistress Mrs. Keppel

who the king had asked for. He had been very popular, since in a curious way subjects prefer their kings to be slightly immoral—since this implies virility and supplements the concept of kings as supermen.

As a broadsheet sold at his funeral put it: "Greatest sorrow England ever had/When death took away our dear Dad; a King he was from head to sole/Loved by his people one and all."

*

GEORGE V was the unexpected occupant of the throne. his brother, Edward, Duke of Clarence was heir but had a long history of illness and died before he could succeed to the throne. Of Eddie, as he was known, there was much speculation. He was thought to be mentally unbalanced, it was hinted that he was involved in the scandal of a raid on a London male brothel. Recently a writer whose imagination must have been working overtime on an undoubtedly fruitful topic, viz., the identity of Jack the Ripper, pinpointed a complex connection with the unfortunate Eddie. During the years of the early nineteen-hundreds there had been homosexual scandals in the German court involving Prince Eulenburg; however, the trial of Eulenburg for perjury (involving charges of homosexuality) was allowed to lapse sine die apparently because of the state of Eulenburg's health.

Mary of Teck, George's Queen, was in fact originally the fiancée of Prince Edward, Duke of Clarence. On his death she dutifully transferred her affections—which were successfully sustained for many years—to George.

In 1910 Edward F. Mylius published a republican paper called The Liberator in Paris. In it he alleged that George V had married, in Malta in 1890, the daughter of Sir Michael Culme-Seymour; had children by her, and in 1893 'foully abandoned her' and contracted a 'sham and shameful' bigamous marriage with Queen Mary, 'daughter of the Duke of Teck'. Mylius was charged with publishing a libel on George V. The 'publishing' was the act of posting the libellous publication at a London post office. The Parisian publication was no defence. Bail was set at £20,000—an excessive amount at any time. Mylius was, as we might expect, denied the right to call the King as witness. Sir John Simon was Solicitor-General and, also as was to be expected, found constitutional reasons why 'the King did not possess the privilege open to other persons of going into the witness-box and refuting a libellous statement on oath, however much he might wish to do so'. (So writes Bechofer Roberts, Simon's biographer.)

Simon brought forward evidence breaking down the Liberator story (presumably written by Edward Holden James) but Mylius stuck to his case that he was unconstitutionally denied the one witness necessary to his case—the King. The jury without leaving the court found Mylius guilty, and the judge then sentenced him to twelve months' imprisonment, remarking (curiously enough) that 'it was unnecessary to pass a heavier sentence' . . . or unwise? Then, also unconstitutionally, a statement by the King was read which categorically denied the charge of bigamy. He said that he would have attended the trial to give evidence except that the Law Officers (including Simon) advised him that such an act would be unconstitutional. Whatever the truth of the Liberator story once again we see that elaborate precautions were taken to obscure the truth of the story.

It would be tedious to repeat the story of the Prince of Wales and Mrs. Simpson. This was not the only woman in his life—although the press succeeded in keeping news of his affairs with Mrs. Frieda Dudley Ward and Lady Furness, both of whom were in the running, out of their columns. The English and American presses were full of rumours (as Ilse Brody in Gone with the Windsors said) 'that the Prince was interested in a Kensington schoolteacher, that he had been attracted by a fascinating Irishwoman; that an actress, or a peeress, had captured his attention. Some of these ladies had a chance of marrying Prince Edward long before Wallis reappeared from Coronado via China and the Chelsea Registry Office'.

JACK ROBINSON

IN THE WRONG PLACE



THE LIFE AND EXTRAORDINARY ADVENTURES OF PRIVATE IVAN CHONKIN, Vladimir Voinovich, pbd Johnathan Cape, £ 4.95.
(Translated - at times rather unfortunately - by Robert Lourie)

WHEN Private Chonkin emerged from the Russian "underground", surfacing first in Paris, arriving here via America, comparisons were instantly and naturally drawn with that sublime anarchist classic *The Good Soldier Švejk*. If Švejk tended to come out on top, it should be remembered that the task Voinovich set himself was more limited, more specific than that of Hasek: namely a satire on the Soviet Dream.

As such *The Life and Extraordinary Adventures of Private Ivan Chonkin* is a funny, a devastating and an essentially libertarian critique of State socialism. Not of its totalitarianism - since, if anything, the adventures show the extent to which central power is confined in a country as massive as the Soviet Union - so much as a labyrinthine bureaucracy motivated by a kind of generalised fear and suspicion, ignorant and careless of the realities around it, engaged mainly in upholding a complicated fabric of appearances and fictions.

The "plot" is simple. On the eve of the outbreak of World War II a Red Army private is sent to guard a plane that has crash-landed in a remote part of the USSR. That he is then promptly forgotten by his unit demonstrates a typical lack of efficiency well below 1984 standards. At first mildly resentful, Chonkin settles down to a life of peaceful rural domesticity. It takes a long time before the clumsy machinery of local police and party apparatus is set in motion. Reports begin to filter through to it about a Red Army deserter hiding out in a remote village. Plans to arrest him go astray, with Chonkin arresting soldiers and the local police lieutenant instead, and putting them to work on the kolkhoz potato harvest. By the time reports of these further disappearances come to the attention of the military, Chonkin has already been elevated in the fertile bureaucratic mind into a whole bandit army. No less than a regiment is sent out to catch him, acting with singular incompetence in the field.

The little private, mystified throughout at the way he is being treated, is finally captured. But, unlike many other satires on bureaucracy, there is an unmistakable optimism about Voinovich's book. If the extraordinary adventures of Pvt Chonkin pour ridicule upon the sacred tenets of Stalinist agriculture, its absurd production norms, its milkmaid heroines of labour and manifestly unsuccessful attempts to convert the human being into a unit of frenetic collectivism; if they mock the military, the secret police, the politicians and the peasants, their underlying foundation is the fragility of the whole Stalinist structure. An immense structure, yes, but needing only a Chonkin to sew confusion and chaos on a correspondingly enormous scale.

We know little of Vladimir Voinovich but his "impeccable" past as an agricultural, factory, railroad and construction worker and his present as a human rights activist and provocateur of Soviet officialdom. (He is reported, for instance, to have written to one suggesting that in order to protect Soviet writers from Western influence Moscow's prisons "with the necessary guards and police dogs (be) placed at your disposal", and on another occasion to have suggested that dissidents sacked from their jobs be awarded the status of "invalid of the ideological war.") Voinovich is also reported to have said that he is apolitical. But surely nothing can better show the libertarianism of Chonkin than the following passage in which a local party official, Kilin, is being ordered to hand in his card:

"'But what for?' asked Kilin despondently. 'What did I do?' 'You unleashed anarchy, that's what you did!' Borisov let the words fall like drops of lead. 'Who ever heard of people assembling all by themselves, without any control on the part of the leadership?'

Kilin went cold inside.

'But listen, Sergei Nikanovich, I mean, you said so yourself - a spontaneous meeting ...'

'Spontaneity, Comrade, must be controlled!'

G.F

*the Right Place as it was generally and ironically known.

2 Short Reviews

ABERDEEN IN THE GENERAL STRIKE by Liz Kibblewhite and Andy Rigby. (Aberdeen People's Press, 163 King Street, Aberdeen. 44p inc. post.)

CANARY GIRLS AND STOCKPOTS by Edith Hall (Workers Educational Association, Luton Branch, Barnfield College, Luton, 65p).

THE FIRST of these pamphlets is summed up by its title. It grew out of an article in *Aberdeen People's Press* to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the strike. The pamphlet is well produced (typeset by Cienfuegos) and has several photographs. The first half is a description of the Strike and the events leading up to it. The writers point out that Aberdeen, largely because of its isolation, had become relatively self sufficient and therefore had many trades, which fragmented union support. A further factor was the region's traditional support of "Radicalism" (i. e. liberalism). The descriptions of the strike itself centre on attempts to prevent transport from functioning; there was a sense of glee as prominent employers were forced to apply for union permits to move loads of fish. Many buses and trams were manned by students. This is remembered today. Throughout the strike TUC leaders insisted that it was merely a legitimate form of industrial action over the specific issue of the miners. The papers *Scottish Worker* and *British Worker* printed lists of "Donts".

The second part of the pamphlet is the recollections of five veterans of the strike, ranging from a postman who was "non-political" at the time of the strike, but not since, and the then Secretary of the Trades Council, who says that he was "Ramsay Macdonald's agent in Aberdeen". These anecdotes are the core of the pamphlet, and make fascinating reading. Overall, the conclusion of the authors is that the TUC leaders' political philosophy betrayed the labour movement. They were frightened of their own rank and file. "Today, with the labour government desperately bolstering up an ailing capitalist economy with state funds made available by cut-backs in welfare and social services, supported by key trade union leaders, we are reaping the consequences of the trends that were highlighted just over fifty years ago."

SYNDICALISM (cont)

Consequently syndicalism, seen as a social movement, has developed continually within the activities and organisations of those "ordinary" people who seek to retain for themselves some control over the social and industrial system. Outside of work, in the community, other safeguards and limits on authority have been fashioned. These curbs on the authorities both in the social and industrial system stem from a deep seated desire on the part of most Englishmen not to allow them to bugger us about.

SYNDICALISM AS A POLITICAL FORCE

It is fashionable for people to talk of lessons to be drawn from historical episodes like the 1900-14 syndicalist upheaval. A syndicalist would find such an approach suspect in that it compels us to look at the present in terms of an historical recipe.

For us I think the only useful lesson is of how the pre-1914 syndicalists made their movement relevant to their times. How did they capture the mood of the ordinary workers? How did they keep in touch with the concrete developments and attitudes going on in the labour movement of their generation, when so many political 'militants' of our generation are little more than ideological drunks and recognised as such on the shopfloor?



Authoress
during First World War.

The other pamphlet is also personal reminiscences. Edith Hall gives a record of her young life in working-class London, first as a child during the First World War, later through a variety of unskilled jobs until she finally became a nurse. She wrote the book with the encouragement of the Luton branch of the WEA. It is impossible to separate quotes from this small book. The whole account breathes with colour (though often of darkness and poverty). Many incidents stick in the mind, just as an example, having to exchange chickens with the neighbours at Christmas because they could not bring themselves to kill, pluck and eat their own birds. The Canary Girls of the title were young munitions workers, their skins stained by chemicals. This pamphlet must be included with the best in its field, such as the work of George Ewart Evans. This is true history. And whilst I'm at it, I must mention that the *Opies' Lore and Language of Schoolchildren* has been reissued in paperback (Paladin, £2.50). If you've never seen this work, make sure you have a look now.

D.P.

The answer is not easy. The pre-war British labour movement, as Standish Meachen⁽⁷⁾ claims, did apparently contradictory things—they struck for wages and struck for status. sent money to the TUC and bucked its leaders; they opposed National Insurance while they collected their benefits; and voted Labour and agreed that Labour accomplished nothing.

What I think we had in the British working man of 1912 was what we've got in a modified form today, a syndicalist militant and a Fabian reformist rolled into one. Somehow the revolutionary syndicalists then developed the knack of distilling these syndicalist passions and ideas latent in British labour and fashioning a movement faithful to the best radical traditions of our people. If syndicalism is again to become a serious political force it is a knack we must discover.

BRIAN BAMFORD

References:

1. *Popular Politics and Society in late Victorian England*, H. Pelling.
2. TUC-1958. Roberts.
3. *Industrial Problems and Disputes* (1920), Sir G. Askwith.
4. *British Industrial Relations*, Phelps Brown.
5. *British Syndicalism 1900-1914*, Bob Holton, p.212.
6. Here I have used the idea of the observance of rules by the anarchist as suggested by Peter Winch in his *The Idea of a Social Science and its relation to Philosophy*.
7. "The Sense of an Impending Clash", Standish Meachen (*American History Review*, 1972)

About FREEDOM PRESS

Since 1886 FREEDOM PRESS has been concerned with making, as well as encouraging others to make, anarchist propaganda. Our journals have dealt with the problems of the day as well as keeping readers informed of the activities of the international movement. *Freedom* (monthly, 1886-1927), *Freedom Bulletin* (occasional, 1928-1932), *Spain and the World* (fortnightly, 1936-39), *War Commentary* (monthly/fortnightly, 1939-44), *Freedom* (fortnightly/weekly, 1945- continuing), *Anarchy* (monthly, 1961-70). All this material will shortly be available on microfilm.

FREEDOM PRESS books and pamphlets have dealt both with practical and theoretical questions of concern to anarchists and libertarian socialists. Not only did FREEDOM PRESS publish the first translations of many of the writings of Kropotkin and Malatesta but at a time when the commercial publishers saw no profit in Berkman, Bakunin or Proudhon, nor in Kronstadt, the Spanish collectives or indeed in anarchism FREEDOM PRESS went on publishing. In the late 1940s and early 'fifties we published Alex Comfort's *Barbarism and Sexual Freedom* and *Delinquency*, John Hewetson's *Sexual Freedom for the Young* and *Ill-Health, Poverty and the State*, and in the middle of the last 'war against fascism' FREEDOM PRESS issued John Olday's *March to Death*, a volume of telling anti-war cartoons, and Marie Louise Berneri's *Workers in Stalin's Russia* at a time when all parties from Tories to Trotskyists were united in closing their eyes and ears to the excesses of Stalinism.

SOME OF OUR CURRENT TITLES:

- HOUSING: An Anarchist Approach, by Colin Ward, 182pp.
paper £1.25, post 20p (U. S. \$2.50)
- MAX STIRNER'S EGOISM, by John P. Clark, 11pp.
paper £1.50, post 14p (U. S. \$3.00)
- COLLECTIVES IN THE SPANISH REVOLUTION, by Gaston Leval, 368pp.
Cloth £4.00, post 55p (U. S. \$8.00)
paper £2.00, post 55p (U. S. \$4.00)
- LESSONS OF THE SPANISH REVOLUTION, by Vernon Richards, 240pp.
Cloth £1.50, post 55p (U. S. \$3.00)
- A B C OF ANARCHISM, by Alexander Berkman, 106pp.
paper £0.50p, post 14p (U. S. \$1.00)
- BAKUNIN & NECHAEV, by Paul Avrich, 32pp
paper, £0.20, post 11p (U S 40 c.)
- THE STATE—Its Historic Role, by Peter Kropotkin, 56pp.
paper, £0.20, post 11p (U. S 40 c.)

NEWLY REPRINTED:

ABOUT ANARCHISM—What Anarchists Believe, How Anarchists Differ, What Anarchists Want, What Anarchists Do, by Nicolas Walter, 32pp. paper 25p, post 7p (U. S. 50 c.)

Soon back in print:

ANARCHY, by Errico Malatesta, 54 pp.,
paper 35p, post 14p (U. S. 70c.)

Also still available are about sixty issues of the monthly journal *Anarchy* 1961-70, edited by Colin Ward (list on request) price 15p each (postage on single copies 7p)

TO REACH US: Arrive at Aldgate East underground station, Find Whitechapel Art Gallery. Angel Alley is next to the Wimpy Bar close to the art gallery.

OPENING TIMES: Note: On Tuesdays 21 and 28 June and 4 July the Bookshop will be closed.
We are open through Friday 2 - 6 pm (and on Thursday until 8 pm), Saturday 10 am - 4 pm.

BOOKSHOP NOTES

FREEDOM PRESS

in Angel Alley
84b WHITECHAPEL HIGH STREET
LONDON E1 Phone 01-247 9249

A mixed bag this week, starting with the two books by Ammon Hennay - that pioneer of the Catholic Worker Movement. Firstly the *Book of Ammon* (£ 4.00 plus 55p postage) - his own story of Christian Anarchist struggle against the First World War, in prison, with Dorothy Day, in Salt Lake City; together with fascinating pen pictures of his contemporaries and friends, Alexander Berkman, Emma Goldman, Bill Haywood, Eugene Debs, Mother Jones and many more. This part of the book is extended backwards as it were into history in the second book - *The One Man Revolution in America* (£ 3.50p plus 47p postage) - a favourite book of mine - seventeen word portraits of Americans who epitomised exactly the one person revolution. In addition to the five already mentioned, other chapters deal with John Woolman, Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine, William Lloyd Garrison, Henry David Thoreau, Albert Parsons, John P. Altgeld, Clarence Darrow, Yukeoma the Hopi, John Taylor, Batholomeo Vanzetti, Malcolm X, Dorothy Day and Helen Demoskoff.

Next a new biography of Lucy Parsons by Carolyn Ashbaugh:- *Lucy Parsons: American Revolutionary* (£ 2.95p plus 26p postage) - this - as far as I am aware - is the first full biographical study of Lucy Parsons to be published, and certainly the only one available at the present; published last year for the Illinois Labor History Society. It is a highly readable work of commitment and scholarship.

The latest edition of *Interrogations* - No. 10 - is now available - £ 1.00p plus 17p postage, and contains as usual articles in Spanish, Italian, French and English. Luis A. Edo on Spanish prisons, Edmond Trifon on the press and media in Eastern Europe, Dave Mansell on the Ulster Conflict, Carlos M. Valganon on Social and Economic developments in late Franco and post Franco Spain, and a document from the North American Congress on Latin America and the American exploitation of Mexican labour.

Next some foreign language titles - this week in Italian:- Jose Peirats: *La CNT nella Rivoluzione Spagnola* - £ 2.50p (29p postage) and Carlos Semprun Maura: *Rivoluzione e Contrarivoluzione in Catalogna* - £ 2.00p (26p postage) - two very important works on the Spanish Revolution. An English version of the Peirats has been published and we hope to have it available shortly - meanwhile - if you read Italian, these two works are indispensable.

The third Italian title is Domenico Tarizzo's monumental *L'Anarchia* (£ 5.50p plus 70p postage) - over 320 pages, including 190 reproductions and illustrations many in full colour, with a preface by Paul Avrich. This marvellously produced book is a history of world anarchism from Godwin up to the present day.

For those of you going on holiday shortly how about full colour anarchist postcards to freak out your postman and friends. The famous pyramid of Capitalism design with text in Swedish and English. £ 1.00p for 10 plus 9p postage.

Lastly, our bargain basement - Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid and Conquest of Bread* both in hardback at £ 2.50p per volume (plus 47p postage) - if you don't have these already - now's your chance. Unrepeatable offer and all that..... Also, sadly, we have a small selection of flood-damaged books going at giveaway prices - callers only, no reasonable offer refused!

J.H.